

Minutes of Meeting
Health Services Council
Project Review Committee-I

DATE: 13 July 2010

TIME: 2:30 PM

LOCATION: Conference Room 401

ATTENDANCE:

Name	Present	Absent	Excused
Committee-I			
Victoria Almeida, Esq. (Vice Chair)	X		
John X. Donahue	X		
John W. Flynn	X		
Wallace Gernt			X
Theresa Jeremiah			X
Amy Lapierre	X		
Steven Lonardo	X		
Thomas M. Madden, Esq.			X
Robert Quigley, DC (Chairman)	X		
Robert Ricci		X	
Robert Whiteside		X	
Committee-II			
Rev. David Shire	X		

Staff: Michael K. Dexter, MPA, Timothy Gilmartin (Intern), Joseph G. Miller, Esq.

Public: (Attached)

1. Call to Order, Approval of Minutes, Conflict of Interest Forms and Extension for the Minutes Availability

The meeting was called to order at 2:35 PM. The Chair noted that conflict of interest forms are available to any member who may have a conflict. A motion was made, seconded and passed by a vote of six in favor with none opposed (6-0) that the availability of minutes for this meeting be extended beyond the time frame as provided for under the Open Meetings Act. Those members voting in favor were: Almeida, Donahue, Flynn, Lapierre, Lonardo, Quigley.

2. General Order of Business

The first item on the agenda was the application of **Butler Hospital** for a Certificate of Need to construct a 2-story addition to house an updated patient assessment service and to accommodate an increase in licensed bed capacity by 26 beds. Staff reviewed the information that mailed for this meeting including comment letters from various organizations.

Dr. Recupero reviewed the proposal and responses to follow up questions. Mr. Lonardo questioned the applicant regarding the genesis for the Kent Unit at Butler Hospital and how the beds were increased from 12 to 29 beds. Staff clarified that review for bed increase was done by the Office of Facilities Regulations as these were not additional beds but rather a transfer of beds.

Mr. Donahue questioned how the 2 units at Butler cooperate with regards to providing patient care and transferring patients among these units. The applicant noted that Butler offers a level of expertise not available at other hospitals. All the rules and regulations regarding transfer from one hospital to another apply when transferring patients among these units. However, the advantage of the Kent unit at Butler is that it can accept Medicaid patients. Mr. Donahue made comments regarding utilizing resources in an efficient manner. Dr. Recupero stated that the beds are full all the time.

The applicant further clarified the Medicaid reimbursement issue. The Chair requested that the applicant do that in writing. Ms. Lapierre clarified some issues surrounding Medicaid.

Ms. Lapierre questioned the applicant regarding the utilization of their capacity. Dr. Recupero provided that information and noted that sometimes beds cannot be filled due to gender issues or privacy requirements.

Mr. Donahue noted that we need to see if there are ways to develop less expensive outpatients approaches compared to more expensive inpatient beds. The applicant stated that there has been an increase in need for psychiatric services of all types. The applicant noted that they are increasing their partial hospital services and outpatient services. The applicant cited issues with reimbursement and that some patients are too acute to manage on an outpatient level. The applicant agreed that expansion should also happen in outpatient services which the applicant is also pursuing. The applicant noted that there is a crisis in child psychiatric beds due to increase in boarding at Hasbro Hospital. Ms. Lapierre noted that there is a difference between child and adult psychiatric beds.

Ms. Lapierre requested that the applicant provide information regarding their outpatient and partial program services. The applicant stated that they are pursuing funding from commercial payors and they are committed to doing both outpatient and inpatient expansion. The applicant noted that the mental health laws preclude the hospital from admitting patients who can be treated in outpatient settings. Ms. Lapierre noted that if more options are available to patients, then those needs could be met in other settings. The applicant stated that the need for services has grown in all settings and has plans to expand the partial program from 60 to 80.

Mr. Lonardo asked for the applicant to comment on the crisis stabilization beds. The applicant stated that they would require a certificate of need and the hospital is only licensed to provide mental health services. The applicant noted that community health centers and STARR do have such beds and the applicant works with them to divert patients. The applicant noted that STARR is always almost at capacity. The applicant noted that if that capacity was increasing that it would be helpful.

The applicant noted that the 24 bed size is the preferred size. The applicant noted that they toured other facilities and wanted double rooms for patients' safety to minimize risk of suicides. The applicant noted that this is also a more economical design. The applicant noted that inappropriate sexual activities of the adolescent populations make the case for single bed rooms in that situation but not on the adult side. The applicant noted that ERs are filled even more with adult psychiatric patients than the child patients. Ms. Lapierre requested that the applicant provide supporting data for the number of adults that are being boarded. Dr. Recupero stated that they don't have access to data

for other hospitals. Staff noted that Mr. Zimmerman is conducting a study, and hospitals, mental health centers and insurers are being surveyed.

The applicant addressed the initiative of MHRH regarding the overcrowding issue. It was noted that the initiative is to minimize the wait time in ER.

The applicant discussed their coordination between Butler and Bradley. It was noted they work closely together but both are often full.

The applicant discussed the reimbursement for psychiatric services. In response to an inquiry made by the Committee, the applicant said they are not part of the disproportionate share program. Ms. Lapierre noted that the funding for that comes from licensing fees which Butler does not pay.

The applicant noted that there has been a shift to the lower level of care but still a need for higher level of care. The applicant noted that Eleanor Slater has downsized their services.

The applicant discussed its financial viability. The applicant noted that they are in good financial position due to being part of Care New England which resulted in efficiencies and savings. Mr. Flynn made positive comments regarding the hospital's financial ratios.

Dr. Recupero discussed the MHRH letter in support of the proposal. Staff noted based on comments from the Committee, a follow up letter was sent to MHRH to get more information.

Dr. Recupero addressed the letter from St. Joseph Hospital and noted that she is not aware of any available beds. The applicant disagreed with using average demand and that they need to look at the peak demand.

Dr. Recupero noted that this project is also about the need to provide a humane system for assessing patients for psychiatric care. The proposal would provide better space and processes. With regards to the Lifespan letter, she noted that Butler decreased its ability to treat children and adolescents and increased adult beds.

Dr. Recupero stated that the demand for psychiatric services will increase with universal healthcare coverage. She stated that efficiencies will not keep up with the increase in need.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Valentina D. Adamova, MBA
Acting Chief Program Development